

REMARKS

The Office Action dated December 9, 2008, has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments to the claims, and the following remarks, are submitted as a full and complete response thereto.

By this Response, claims 1 and 24 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the present invention. No new matter has been added. Claims 2-23, 25-34, and 36-47 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 1 and 24 are currently pending in the application, of which claims 1 and 24 are independent claims.

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending rejections to the claims for the reasons discussed below.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action objected to claims 14 and 37 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. This has been effectively done by incorporating the features of claim 14 into claim 1 and the features of claims 26, 34, and 37 into claim 24. Accordingly, claims 1 and 24 presently contain allowable subject matter. The objection to claims 14 and 37 should be withdrawn as moot in view of their cancellation without disclaimer or prejudice.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-4, 6, 16, 17, 19-28, 33, 39, 40, and 42-47

The Office Action rejected claims 1-4, 6, 16, 17, 19-28, 33, 39, 40, and 42-47 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable as obvious over Barde, *et al.* (U.S. Publication No. 2004/0268400) (“Barde”) in view of Myatt, *et al.* (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0101135) (“Myatt”). As noted above, the pending claims presently recite allowable subject matter. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 7, 8, 10, and 29-32

The Office Action rejected claims 7, 8, 10, and 29-32 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable as obvious over Barde in view of Myatt, and further in view of Kinno, *et al.* (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0154217) (“Kinno”). It is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn as moot, since the rejected claims have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 11-13, 15, 18, 34, 36, 38, and 41

The Office Action rejected claims 11-13, 15, 18, 34, 36, 38, and 41 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable as obvious over Barde in view of Myatt, and further in view of Masuda (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0078031) (“Masuda”). It is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn as moot, since the rejected claims have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 5 and 9

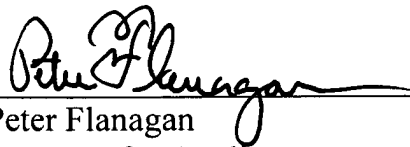
The Office Action rejected claims 5 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable as obvious over Barde in view of Myatt, and further in view of Cox, *et al.* (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0216145) (“Cox”). It is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn as moot, since the rejected claims have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that each of claims 1 and 24 recites subject matter that is neither disclosed nor suggested in the cited art. It is, therefore, respectfully requested that both of claims 1 and 24 be allowed, and that this application be passed to issuance.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, Applicant’s undersigned representative at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,


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